Purdue Agriculture: Integrated Research, Extension and Education Plan of Work
(Questions and Answers)

What is the Plan of Work?
The Plan of Work provides a structure for assessing present activities, scanning for future needs, communicating with stakeholders and showing accomplishments from our efforts. The Plan of Work is a roadmap for anticipating emerging needs and developing responsive research. The Plan of Work serves two important functions. First, it provides a foundation for setting priorities for the College of Agriculture. By integrating research, extension and education, we can communicate our efforts better. This provides better visibility for our programs and enables us to be more competitive for national funding opportunities. Secondly, it is a USDA-CSREES requirement (through a congressional mandate) for receiving federal formula funding that supports many of our projects and programs. We are required to develop a 5-year Plan of Work and we are also required to report our accomplishments yearly against the plan. The new Plan of Work is a “rolling” 5-year plan, meaning that it can be modified each year to best fit our needs as our research, extension, and education integrated programs grow and are adapted to meet new challenges.

How is the Plan of Work different from before?
For the first time, the new Plan of Work is an integrated plan, which includes a combination of research and extension efforts to address state and national Agricultural needs. Previously, one Plan of Work was submitted for research and separate plan was submitted for extension. Purdue University, like many other land grant institutions, was criticized for not integrating efforts better to perform research and communicate impacts to our stakeholders. The College of Agriculture also recognizes that many nationally competitive research opportunities, (USDA, NIH, NSF) now require proposals that include both research and outreach components. By developing an integrated structure, we are striving to become more competitive and successful in receiving these funding opportunities. With the development of a “rolling” Plan of Work, we can modify program planning and development as our programs grow and change.

How is the new Purdue Plan of Work designed?
The new integrated Plan of Work includes ten different program areas (listed below) that combine a comprehensive description of our research and extension integration efforts from the College of Agriculture, College of Consumer and Family Sciences, and School of Veterinary Medicine. The ten programs for the Purdue POW are:

1. Natural resources and environment
2. Plants and their systems
3. Animals and their systems
4. Agricultural, natural resources, and biological engineering
5. Food/non-food products: development, processing, quality, and delivery
6. Economics, markets and policy
7. Human nutrition, food safety, human health and well being
8. Family well being
9. Youth development
10. Economic, community development

College of Agriculture
Agricultural Administration Building, Room 114 ■ 615 West State Street
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2053
How was the new Purdue Plan of Work developed?
A committee from the College of Agriculture, representing Agricultural Research Programs and Cooperative Extension Services, worked together this past spring to develop the new integrated Plan of Work. The committee obtained information from nearly every faculty member in the College of Agriculture. Most information came from databases that included USDA yearly reporting information (i.e. CRIS projects, Grant progress), from impact statements, and from annual reports from different Centers in the College. The committee also worked closely with Deans and Directors from the College of Agriculture, College of Consumer and Family Sciences, and School of Veterinary Sciences. Information gathered from stakeholder interviews and community sessions conducted throughout Indiana in 2003 and 2005 was used to establish priorities for the Plan of Work.

The consensus of the committee was to design the Purdue Plan of Work so that it would parallel national and state goals set forth by USDA and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). USDA has established eight goals and ISDA has seven strategic goals. The Purdue Plan of Work has incorporated USDA and ISDA goals. The only difference is that the 8th goal from USDA (called “Family and Community Systems”) was divided into 3 separate goals for the Purdue program (“Family well being,” “Youth development,” and “Economic, community development”). This was done to better reflect the research, extension, and educational needs in Indiana.

What does the Plan or Work contain?
The Plan of Work contains an overall summary followed by a description of the ten programs identified in the plan. Within each of the ten planned programs, there are eleven sections in the document: 1) knowledge areas codes, 2) a brief summary, 3) situation and priorities, 4) assumptions, 5) ultimate goals of the program, 6) outputs, 7) output indicators, 8) outcome indicators, 9) external factors, 10) evaluation studies planned, and 11) data collection methods.

Of most interest to you may be knowledge areas, the brief summary, and output and outcome indicators. The knowledge areas describe specifically the type of research and outreach effort being performed (by percentage) within each planned program. These knowledge areas are defined by USDA and are the same that we already use for CRIS reporting. The summary provides a nice description of our effort in each planned program. The indicators are specific output and outcome targets that we will be reporting against each year.

How does the affect Purdue Faculty and Staff?
With the new Plan of Work in place, the main expectation is that Purdue faculty and staff will develop integrated approaches to better meet state and national priorities. To show our impacts better, a modified reporting system will be required and utilized by USDA and Purdue. More specific information related to reporting will be provided in the fall of 2006.

Where can I find more information related to the Purdue University Plan of Work?
The entire Plan of Work, and summaries of each Plan of Work program, may be obtained at: http://sharepoint.agriculture.purdue.edu/ces/pow/default.aspx. You may also contact Janet Bechman directly at (765) 494-8309 or at jcb@purdue.edu. For Purdue staff, this information is also available in the CES intranet – select Plan of Work/Annual Report.